1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

136
164 government has now made free injections available at "big
774 markets" of provincial towns, Bedbugs are also prevalent, of the bloodsucking variety. They are considered a nussance by the Amhara, but all that is done is to air the "alga" bed in the sunlight, which merely reduces the infestation temporarily. Flies are also abundant and very aggressive, so that a flyswitch ("chera") is kept in motion for comfort. Contagious diseases spread readily. Just after each rainy season, malarial mosquitoes have caused epidemics up to levels of 5,000 feet, on the shore of overflowing lakes and rivers.

511
[23] In the majority of cases, some livestock is taken into the living hut (tuqul) everynight. The tuqul has, of course, an unwashable mud floor, no windows or chimney, soot-blackened ceiling, cobwebs in corners. There is no change of clothing at night, merely an added "kutta" or sheepskin, against the cold. Aside from drinking cups, there are no individual utensils.

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[548] Towns, including provincial towns, are centers for the spread of syphilis and other venereal diseases, due to the existence of entire streets of "women in-between marriages" who act as restauranteurs-prostitutes. When surface lesions appear, the native "wogasha" is consulted; or since the Italian invasion made the "needle" popular, the modern government medical personnel is approached. But patients usually cease to continue treatment when surface lesions disappear.[67]
[759]

Eating "brundo", raw beef, at feasts, almost always leads to tapeworm and other taenia infestation. Fortunately

67. Guthe, Th: Venerial Disease in Ethiopia. W.H.O.Bulletin, Vol.2, 1949, pl. 85-138.

588 The "damoz" temporary wife is usually recruited from a lower class than that of the man, of landless family. But often she is merely a divorcee, who "lives alone" in a street inhabited by women of similar status in the town, who are in-between marriages, and make a living serving transients with bed and board, giving them the comforts of home, cooking, baking, cleaning. They are not considered good-time prostitutes of the mead-houses ("tej-byet"), and are therefore much more respected.

588 487 178 Respectably-married ("semanya") men would, in the past, take on a "damoz" wife to accompany them on caravan trips, to spare the "semanya" wife the discomforts and perils of the journey. Now that trucks travel comparatively fast from province to province, the travelling "damoz" wife has become rare, but the residential "damoz" wife continues in the towns much as before, and "semanya" wives are therefore not as tolerant of them as they once were when they appreciated their husbands' efforts to spare them discomfort. For, they reasoned, "who else will cook for him, how will he eat?".

588 848 The "damoz" wife's children are fully legitimate. She is far higher in status than the simple concubine ("yachen garad", lit. the servant-maid of the thigh), who was and is often a permanent member of the household, often of doubtful or half-Shanqalla ancestry, who has no damoz rights, and whose children have no rights of recognition beyond what the master cares to give them. (The concubine is also called "tara" or "tarata" in some districts).

588 171 The respectability or semi-respectability of the "damoz" wife compares to the Persian "ssighe", and the Arab Muslim temporary wife permitted in the Quran (IV:28 - "And in so far as you have derived pleasure from these women for a stipulated time, give them their

586 issue the traditional divorce, "mäftat" (lit. freeing, i.e. to marry another) dissolving "semanya" marriages. But before doing so he tries to reconcile the couple, quoting proverbs, calling on kin elders, postponing the case time and again to let them "cool off". One mate can summon the other before him by appealing to the "manfas gubae" to issue a summons, and if the mate refuses to come, police can be sent to bring him by force.

A desperate wife can bring pressure on the "mänfäs gubäe" by appealing to him as a priest, tearing off her "matab" neckcord signifying Coptic faith, and threatening to turn Muslim. This is interpreted to signify that she is "nearly out of her mind with suffering".

If the divorce is granted, each mate must pay a fine of ETH$5.-, for technically they have "torn the marriage oath". The divorce is witnessed by the mizë, the kin of each mate, and the cheqa shum. Half the husband's property goes to her, particularly of their communal property and its increase, except items called "gil" which they had agreed in writing not to divide and retain as individual property. Unweaned babies remain with the mother, also, usually, children below the "age of reason" (ages 7 to 10). The husband will often take older children, especially sons. If he permanently has injured his wife's eye, or hand, he must pay her damages, even if there is no divorce. The formula of divorce, pronounced by each mate, is "May the Emperor die, I have divorced you".

586 548 In rural areas and in the past, a woman almost always returned to her kinfolk. But since the growth of towns, many divorced women have been drawn to the easier livelihood of the "street of single girls" in towns, where they live in shacks, and serve as short-term

586 "damor" wives and innkeepers, offering bed, board and home comforts
548 to traders and transients. By treating some customers well, they hope to find another husband. When no clients are available, they still earn some income by brewing beer and selling it. They wash themselves and their clothing far more often than peasant women, and pay servants to do the heavy labor and cleaning for them. They leave their children with their kinfolk, sometimes sending money. If she were to remain with her kinfolk herself, family pressure would be great for her to remarry quickly, very likely a more undesirable husband than the first.

587 If and when she does remarry, she usually has few of the social safeguards of her first, virgin marriage. There are no "mizē" to protect her, the "ʾanfäs gubaē" will not be as sympathetic in marital disputes, and the new husband may take her far away from her kinfolk. But by this time she has matured, at least in experience, and is far more capable of protecting her own interests, economically as well as emotionally, than in her first marriage.

5. The Age of Dominance: The Elder:

888 The term "shemagelvē" signifies an elder; serious, wise, past the prime of physical strength but more energetic and persistent in determining and commanding human relations, particularly within the residential kin group, than ever before. He is treated with great respect.

887 He is one of the dominant elders who rule the kin group, parcel out land for usufruct to biological family units, make decisions in marriage negotiations and other personal affairs involving the family. In town, they act as judges on higher levels. Among the

275 487 is served with it. Traders and travellers often stop by during the day, and the place usually closes not long after sundown.

275 487 265 The barley-beer house ("talla byet") is still fairly respectable for people of commoner and lower classes, but not for respected elders or priests. It is operated by women, either matronly married women or "unattached girls", i.e. divorcees. It serves not only as dispenser of beer, but also serves full meals, so that the travelling trader is dependent on it. For as little as Eth. $0.25 (U.S. 10 cents) the patron may obtain a minimal meal of enjara bread, 2 liters of talla beer, and all the roast chickpeas and roasted barley ("qolo") he can eat; meatstew costs more. Often such a restaurant contains an extra room with a bed for the weary traveller to sleep in, and such an inn is then called "meshta byet" (lit. accommodation house, from "mesht" or "mest", meaning wife), for the traveller has no difficulty in securing a temporary wife for the duration of his local stay, among the divorcees.

275 548 The mead-house ("tai byet") does not even have the minimal respectability of the talla byet. It is operated strictly for entertainment, i.e. drinking and sexual pleasures. For the owner, usually a clever, middleaged townswoman, it represents one of the few ways of amassing capital and becoming one of the wealthiest local citizens. She controls her waitresses much as a madam would. To protect herself from brawls, which are not infrequent, she also employs, - though they are kept out of sight so as not to frighten off customers, - one or several husky bouncers. The proverb says:

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"In the prostitute's house,
all the time a scuffle."

For, even in prostitution a pretense of "temporary wife" is made.

275 548 Even a prostitute would be ashamed to engage in one-night affairs, to engage in sexual activities coldly without at least some minimal affect. She is paid for her services after consumption, or tries to take the [illegible] while he is asleep, but will not aggressively demand [illegible]. Therefore, customers who may develop an interest in [illegible] waitress-prostitute, not rarely fight for her affection, temporary though it is. No prostitute would take more than one man in one night, not only because this would be very shameful, but also her competitors would beat her for such unethical behavior. In the past the "täj bret" was publicly advertised by a red cross painted on the outside wall. During the Italian occupation, protests of the International Red Cross caused removal of this sign, but one still encounters it in remoter areas.

273 [77] The use of an even stronger drink, "aräqi" (arrak), the only distilled drink among traditional beverages, is very likely of Arab introduction; It is on the increase in towns because of exposure to strong European liquor during the Italian occupation, but is not made or consumed in the rural hamlets, not even on feasts. In the towns it is made, usually to fill specific orders, by the wives of soldiers or policemen, to add to the meager income of the husbands, whose salary of Eth$20 - 25 is lower than that of the unskilled laborer (Eth$30 - per month). It is produced from "enselal" caraway seeds, qesho (leaf f. fermentation), semi-fermented barley ("beqqel") and dagussa grain, [illegible] of which are crushed, mixed with water, [illegible] added, and the fermented mixture is boiled for 10 hours, distilled through a [illegible] reed. The finished product is carried, in a European glass bottle, to the customer directly, e.g. the owner of the "täj bret", and is consumed, because of the higher price, by semi-educated clerks and officials with good salaries, or travelling traders or army or

B. Sex in Amhara Culture.

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548 The extension of the concept of "temporary wife" to prostitution has already been touched upon in connection with the entertainment aspect of sex. It is this extension which imposes on this activity a characteristic culture pattern, involving the "unattached woman's" hoping to find another husband, and meanwhile serving transient travellers with food, shelter, and even some wifely affect. In return for this partial constraint, the culture pattern rewards the "unattached woman" prostitute with certain minimal respectability. She may actually break the curse of barrenness of a first marriage by bearing a child, and thus finding it easier to find another husband. She also has the chance to experiment in sex, learning from travellers, and teaching the local townsmen and peasants. Most terms meaning prostitute are therefore matter-of-fact, and not insulting ("shärmuta" - the most polite reference, regarded as an Arabic loanword; "qalïmota"; "amänzera" (lit. recipient of the seed); "lagärbaga" (lit. "to the whole country", public woman). However, references to "loose personality, e.g. "mäsessenya sïet" are insulting.

834 A strong constraint placed on the temporary wife - prostitute, as on any other Amhara, is against her sexual intercourse with a Muslim. Infraction of this rule would bring immediate and severe ostracism. Since many of her potential clients are travelling traders, many of whom are Muslims, the temptation is strong to ignore that rule. But if she does, she can seek reinstatement in Amhara-Coptic society, which she is considered to have renounced in consummating a union with a Muslim, by appealing penitently to her confessor, who may then agree to re-baptize her, which is considered necessary.. This will lift the ban of ostracism against her, on her social level.

This religious ban against sexual intercourse with a non-Copt

587 The proverb says:

[539] "He who knows not how to kiss,
his nose he will blow on you."

The divorcée often develops strategy and techniques to win a man of her choice: She may give him a ring to remind him of her when he is away from her; when he visits her, she feeds him "ergo" (thick buttermilk), so he will be sleepy and remain at her house, rather than go to his men friends to gamble. Women have a proverb about men:

[539] "Like a child, (he is attracted) by the ring,
like a cat, (he is attracted) by milk."

If she has a mother who is a good cook, the divorcee will employ this attraction, saying:

[539] "More than the flesh of the daughter,
(he is attracted by)
the butter (i.e. cooking) of the mother."

[832] When this fails, she may enlist the supernatural aid of love amulets, "mästäfaqer", purchased from the däbtära scribe with the man's name inscribed, to inspire love for her in him; and in addition to the fee, may treat the dabtara to beer and sweets to enlist his greatest power on her behalf.

588 If her lover is already married, she may nevertheless establish a "sweetheart" ("wusherma") relationship with him, though she has no claim on "danoz" wages or recognition of this temporary wifehood. This is also one of the few cases in which a woman will try not to have children.

548 588 However, a divorcee who was divorced largely on account of her barrenness - and about 25% of the townswomen are barren at least for some years - will try to have a child, even out of wedlock. She will then very likely join the "unattached women" in the streets inhabited

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588 by them in the towns. Divorcees who are young and still attractive often do not want to return to their kinfolk, especially if they have seen town life and the kin life in remote rural hamlets. Like men doing manual labor, she may go to another district or even province to avoid shaming them. On this street she will usually begin by brewing daily barley beer, or even expand this to a small restaurant-inn performing the housekeeping tasks which she has been taught since early childhood and which are the only trade she knows. Occasionally she will then take in a travelling trader for 3 days or more, cook and bake and brew beer for him, also sleep with him if he desires. She hopes, not rarely with success, that one or the other will make the relationship permanent.

831 Men take great pride in virility, but also in sexual technique. They liken the activity to expertly "riding a horse" ("afärräsä" lit. [842] he rode her like a horse, is used for "defloration"). Men believe that it is frequency of intercourse, each night or several times each night, that brings conception. The popular, vulgar name for coitus is "bädda" (related to "bädäbbädä", he beat, whipped; shook with fever). Variations in sexual technique are referred to as "mett" (lit. hits). An impotent male is mocked as "alecha" (lit. sauce without pepper).

There is a sharp distinction between references that are "rude", consisting of direct references to sexual organs and activities; and veiled language used to refer to such matters, if at all, before an elder, priest, or upper-class person. The former is referred to as "yasäfir gal" (lit. light matters), connoting "shameful matters". This includes such direct names as "gela" for penis ("jälla" is even more vulgar), "yägela feregi" (lit. fruit of the penis) for testicles, "ens" for vulva. Curiously enough, overt loud expression of these terms are heard only from little boys, e.g. when, during the rainy season, they

3. Expressive Physical Arts.

531 Physical arts, like their material culture, are little developed among the Amhara, compared to their elaborate spiritual culture. If their life cycle gives any clue, it seems that the explanation lies at least in part in the end of free experimentation at the onset of adolescence, after which the experimentation is fettered into lines ordained by the Coptic church. Especially fine art, is considered exclusively within the domain of the church. This leaves little beyond body care and ornamentation for expression of physical arts, and even [302] this is partly dedicated to religion, such as the rationalized plucking of pubic hair of the woman, and the fullest expression of body arts on the occasion of church festivals.

171 It is also interesting to observe how patterns of the Middle East and of Africa are so evidently drawn from and synthesized in the traditional Amhara pattern of expressive physical arts, particularly in body care and ornamentation.

A. Body Care and Ornamentation.

515 [312] Washing in the dry season is difficult, since water is scarce and there are no wells. However, with some little effort, water can even then be obtained by digging in the riverbed, since the water table is high; this is what travellers do. Near towns the latter effort develops into a business, for water carriers, employing women as cheap labor to carry the water in their clay pots uphill to the town, charge 5¢ [548] (Ethiopian) per potfull of water. Only the "unattached woman" who has a cash income from beer-brewing or temporary wife - prostitution, can afford this, and usually buys a potfull of this muddy water every day during the long dry season, to wash herself and her clothing regularly and frequently, at a time when the fully respectable Amhara housewife goes unwashed (except for hands and private parts). Divorcees looking for husbands and professional women alone feel the need for daily

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

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Some women, particularly those possessed by the female zar Shanqit, learn to solicit money from strangers (as described during the convention). Some women thus gradually enter the path to prostitution, while others become independent businesswomen.

The attitude of husbands of zar-possessed wives varies and often is ambivalent. A rustic balagär often fears that if he refuses the time and money and sacrifices demanded by his wife for her zar, the neglected zar will take worse revenge (e.g. on his cattle) or will send locusts to eat his grain, or so distract his wife that she will set fire to the hut. He knows also that if he divorces her, half his cattle and other movable property will be taken by the wife. Thus it is cheaper to let her take an occasional chicken or, more rarely, a young goat to the zar. Some men, especially in town, are ashamed to admit that their wives frequent the house of the zar. Semi-educated men, who might themselves consult the zar doctor on some matter of business, forbid their wives to go there. This is more to protest a blow to their prestige than out of modernism, but they will divorce her if she persists.

X 794 586 798

A chronically unhappy marriage not infrequently ends in divorce by way of the zar cult. The "mänfäs gubaé" is placed in an awkward position when the husband or the wife sue for divorce from their "semanya" marriage on the grounds of zar possession. For while as priest of the Coptic church he cannot admit the reality of the zar world, there is sufficient overlap between that and the world of evil spirits in which the priest does (unofficially) believe and against which he may himself, as däbtära, have written amulets. This explains at least in part why the Coptic church ignores the zar cult, and thus

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164 of the persons treated by him suffered from syphilis. It is peculiar that he saw little of what he calls "skin syphilis," which is now extremely common. Hirsch (1886) thinks that while the northern highland was infected early the disease most likely did not reach Shoa until the 19th century. He states that at the time of Rigler's travels (1852) it had apparently not yet reached the Galla country.

Today syphilis is common all over Ethiopia. It is estimated that from fifty to eighty percent of the population suffers from this disease. It would seem that the rate is lowest in Somalia and highest in Gojjam and in Addis Ababa. Little exact information is available. The U. S. Technical Project, however, was able to confirm the extremely high rates in a survey of three villages, where from 50 to 85 percent of the population was found to suffer from syphilis.

Tertiary lesions are rather rare, most likely due to the fact that life expectancy is so low, but the secondary symptoms of the skin and viscera are very common. The general manifestations are more or less pronounced. Rashes are seen of macular, papular acneiform, varicelloid, or impetiginous form. Primary syphilitic ulcers are often associated with other venereal ulcerations. Mixed infections are far more common than in Europe.

Of the other venereal diseases, gonorrhea is extremely common, as is also soft chancre. Lymphogranuloma inguinale is seen now and then, but is not important.

164 As elsewhere, the venereal problem in Ethiopia is intimately linked to the general
548 social life of the people. It would seem that sex morals, as understood by occidentals, have never been particularly strict among the Amharas. It is stated by local missionaries that already at the age of sixteen the young Amhara used to begin visiting prostitutes, and that it, therefore, was quite common to find, when he was ready for marriage, at about 18, that he had acquired both syphilis and gonorrhea. While it should be pointed out that the present gov-

[p. 715A]

164 ernment under Emperor Haile Selassie is
548 acutely aware of the seriousness of this problem, and seeks to educate the people to understand its dangers, corrective efforts have been severely handicapped so far by lack of trained educators and physicians.

164 We are dealing with two forms of syphilis in Ethiopia. In the urban districts and along the main highways we have an "epidemic" form, a syphilis which is being spread at a great rate of speed up and down the lines of communication. In the more isolated parts of the country the disease is also present, but in what might be called an endemic form, the larger part of the population suffering from congenital syphilis, with some imported fresh cases.

One of the most surprising facts about this congenital syphilis is that it does not seem to show up in early childhood. Among 10,000 children examined by the Italians, no clinical case of syphilis was seen, although at least 60 percent of the children's parents were syphilitic.

During the Italian occupation the venereal situation grew still worse, notwithstanding an extensive medical service. This was due to the general war conditions in the country with the constant movement from one place to another. Castellani's fantastic statements on the efficiency of the Italian preventive system have been adequately discussed by Manson-Bahr (1941). The large Italian labor forces introduced for road building were an important factor in the spread of the disease. The considerable development of the road net has been a factor of extreme importance.

Tuberculosis

There has been considerable discussion of the age of tuberculosis in Ethiopia. The earlier writers, like Bruce (1790), and Courbon (1861), either do not mention the disease, or, like Rueppell (1840) and Kirk (1843), their descriptions are so vague that no definite conclusions can be drawn. Blanc (1869) states that at Magdala scrofula, consisting of severe inflammation of

[p. 715 B]

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

*883 178 581 brides be virgin. Related norms greatly restrict their quest for romantic love. Since Ethiopian society still expects its maidens to be shy and retiring, and to avoid social relations with boys outside their families, the boys find few *883 834 178 opportunities for getting to know members of the opposite sex. Even in those few situations where sociability between the sexes is publicly permitted, ingrained tendencies to segregate the sexes persist. The most liberal context for such sociability, the University College campus, has witnessed relatively little interaction between male and female students. In spite of their occasional resolutions to act more boldly, the college boys have in the past tended to shy away from the co-eds except during such rare formal events as a college dance or off-campus parties.

883 836 178 • 548 834 This is not to say that modern adolescent males have no opportunity for premarital sexuality. On the contrary, their opportunities in this regard are perhaps better than ever. The proliferation of brothels in Ethiopia's urban centers makes sexual initiation easy, almost a routine event. Students also frequent these houses for social entertainment, dancing to swing and Latin rhythms, and sipping beer or soft drinks. Thus the continued sanctions against social intercourse in more respectable forms work to sharpen the Amhara dichotomy between decency and sexuality, and leave modern boys with a double standard that separates the marriageable girls from the enjoyable ones.

*883 178 581 584 [152] The idea that marriage should be founded on romantic love has brought greater anxiety as well as hope into the lives of Ethiopian adolescents. This anxiety is due in part to the above-mentioned inhibitions against that easy commerce of the sexes which so facilitates the discovery of a suitable love object. It also reflects a certain ambivalence toward the new ideal, based on a lingering attachment to the authority of the old system. This was manifest, for example, in the response to a college debate on the topic, "Resolved: that the custom of letting the parents choose a spouse for the children should be maintained," that took place in 1959. Although on anonymous questionnaires *90 per cent* of the college students said they will probably decide whom to marry themselves, and only 3 per cent said the decision would be made by parents or other relatives, in voting on the matter after the debate the students (in contrast to the judges who awarded the negative debaters) publicly declared themselves 42 per cent affirmative, 41 per cent negative, with 17 per cent abstaining.

*883 178 581 586 Anxiety regarding the new conception of marriage, finally, is also connected with a new-fashioned fear of divorce. The mind of the modern adolescent vacillates between the ideal of an abiding marital relationship based on

152 * Due perhaps to the greater importance of their peers, sexual accomplishments have now become a frequent topic of conversation and a matter for boasting among modern adolescent boys.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

The Locals

571 Ethiopians with only a secondary school education comprise a group which must be reckoned as part of a burgeoning intelligentsia. Relative to the mass of the population, their intellectual attainments are high indeed. Although their cultural level is usually lower than that of the returnees, they include a few extremely cultivated self-educated men, and others whose intense intellectual curiosity would put the average returnee to shame. Apart from such considerations, however, the fact that they are among the small number of bearers of modern culture in present-day Ethiopia suffices to justify considering them as part of a secular educated elite. The very small but growing number of graduates from Ethiopian colleges who do not go abroad for graduate study may for the present discussion be included in this group, though in some respects their situation is intermediate between the locals and the returnees.

The basic differences between the returnees and locals is that the latter never lost touch with Ethiopia. Their growth has been more closely in step with the growth of their nation. Not having been accustomed to the comforts of a more modern environment, they find it less trying to live with what Addis Ababa has to offer. Not having become so deeply attached to norms rooted in an alien culture, they need not rack themselves re-adjusting. They have been spared the extremes of "soaring and collapsing enthusiasm" which inform the experience of so many foreign-educated men in traditional societies.[60]

Their cultural orientation is far less anomic than it is patriotic. They have remained enmeshed in familiar personal nexuses, to kin and schoolmates, ethnic and regional confreres, which have minimized the disruptive effect of rapid culture diffusion. Because of their essentially particularistic orientation, they are far less perplexed about the problems of institutionalizing universalistic standards than they are enthusiastic about anything that represents indigenous achievement, such as the modern secular songs created and performed by talented members of the Imperial Bodyguard or the National Patriotic Association.

Their work life is often quite gratifying: it represents, in any case, the best that they have ever known at first hand. It is not so hard for them to get used to rudimentary facilities and procedures, or to lower standards of performance. They are supplely adaptive to the moods of their superiors and the nuances of domestic political intrigue, even though they may be moved periodically to denounce such intrigue.

The locals also tend to be more content in their sexual adjustment than the returnees. The local can live happily for a long time as a bachelor, maintaining polite and distant relations with the traditional girls and frequenting the

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11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

brothels for dancing and more intimate relations. (Returnees normally do not have patience for the shy, traditional girls; and they are too concerned about public opinion to be seen visiting brothels. When they or the locals do visit the brothels, it is often by way of a backdoor entrance.) When they marry, the locals almost invariably choose a traditional type of wife with relatively little education and with whom they expect to have an authoritarian relationship.

In sum: the local is not so afflicted by those problems which derive from the central dilemma of the returnee—how to fulfil himself according to modern standards in an intractable, traditional environment. The local's dilemma typically lies in a different realm, that of economic and social mobility. Whereas the returnee has been given a comparatively high income and status almost as a matter of course, the local has normally started his work life with a relatively low salary and little prestige. If the returnee has felt deprived relative to the Westerners in whose society he has lived, the local has felt deprived relative to the returnee.

The local lives on a day-to-day basis at a relatively simple standard. Though he shares the returnee's passion for woolen suits and, in many cases, for a car of his own, he is not, like the returnee, preoccupied with the quest for housing that conforms to Western standards. Except for those with extraordinary talents and family connections, the locals have had difficulty locating jobs that they feel are not beneath their dignity and which pay salaries sufficient to cover their relatively modest needs. They customarily receive a starting salary in the neighborhood of Eth$150. The more ambitious and fortunate among them have, by changing jobs, manipulating superiors, and improving skills, worked their way up to salaries in the Eth$400–$500 category. Some have become provincial teachers for a while, in order to accumulate money on which to live while shopping for a position in Addis Ababa and with which to influence some higher official to grant it to them. There remains a hard core of locals who feel they are underpaid and live in constant resentment of this situation.

This resentment has produced a general sort of negativism which characterizes many of the locals, a negativism expressed in the form of backbiting and denunciation of the higher government officials and the nobility generally. They decry social injustice and the uses of nepotism. They moralize profusely against those whom fortune has shown greater favors. But not all their social criticism is born of resentment. There are also among the locals many young men who are comfortably situated but fired by patriotic fervor with a desire for social reform.

The local is as deeply concerned about asserting his status vis-à-vis the less educated as he is to advance his position in the hierarchy. Locals are extreme-

12:Young E-4,5 (1966) 1971 MP5 Amhara MP5
Begemder

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632 once-weekly market, staggered, so that the market days of over-lapping spheres do not coincide. Peasant exchange at these markets tend to be "sectional" in character; that is to say, producer-sellers bring regional specialties (such as cotton and high quality cayenne from kola lands; cereals, fresh vegetables, and livestock from highland farms), or occupational specialties (such as Falasha iron mongery and pots; the leather goods of the Fakiy, a largely endogamous artisan group). In addition to local products, peasants come to purchase imported goods (especially clothing) and the produce of distant parts of the Empire (such as salt bars from the Danakil Depression). The market is also the peasant's tie to the world market, to which he sends cattle and cattle hides.

The large market towns, with their numerous consumer crowds, offer important economic inducements to
[275]
-[548] the peasant marketeer. Beyond these economic functions, the large town offers diversions and attractions unavailable in the peasant's home parish---exotic surroundings, the temporary fellowship and entertainment of beer houses and mead halls, and the sexual companionship of the town's numerous prostitutes.

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796 The town also attracts peasant visitors on matters unrelated to the market place. The monthly feast days of various saints of the Coptic Church are occasions for special celebrations, and these attract peasants, out of